

STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

INFORMATION DIVISION
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No. 53/50 DON'T LET ASIA SPLIT THE WEST

By the Secretary of State for External Affairs,
Mr. L.B. Pearson

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The greatest threat at the moment to the unity of purpose and policy of the Western grand alliance against Communist imperialism and aggression lies, I think, in the Far East. It arises out of differences of viewpoint over the scope and nature of the menace of communism in Asia and the measures which should be taken to meet it. If these differences persist and deepen, they may cause serious damage to the cooperation which has developed since the war and which has expressed itself not only in a close working relationship within the United Nations, but in such agencies for collective action as NATO and ANZUS (the Australian-New Zealand-US defense pact).

Furthermore, these differences often find the United States on one side and the governments of Western Europe and the British Commonwealth of Nations on the other - a result which causes special anxiety to a Canadian, but which should give no comfort to anyone except a potential aggressor.

There is no dispute between us over the attitude we should adopt when the international Communist conspiracy expresses itself in the form of military aggression - in Korea or elsewhere in Asia. We accept the obligation of collective resistance and assistance under the Charter of the United Nations, even though the manner in which that obligation is discharged may have to vary, both as between states and between areas.

In Korea, for instance, the United States took a bold and essential lead at the United Nations in having North Korea branded as the aggressor, and has borne by far the major non-Korean share of resistance to that aggression. The losses and the tragedies of the Korean War have made a strong impact on the American heart and mind. Other countries who have since 1914 experienced more than once and in full measure the bloodshed and misery of war should remember this.

On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that if some countries have sent only small contingents to Korea, those countries are still weak from the losses and devastation of World War II, far greater than anything this continent suffered; and that some of them are also involved in their own military operations against Communist aggression and banditry. Mutual understanding is essential here if the alliance is not to be poisoned.